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* CHRIST AND MODERN THOUGHT.

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The history of ages and generations may be traced, not only in the events which transpire, but in the topics which most engage men's minds, and occupy their chief thoughts. Ours can hardly be called a meditative age—it is rather an age of *action* than of *thought*, yet it is not without its profound and earnest thinkers; nor is it without its great themes attracting attentive and prolonged study. Wonderful in the progress it has chronicled, and the improvement it has achieved, it is not the least remarkable feature in this age, that its most intense thought is concentrated on an historical person who passed away from the gaze of mankind some eighteen and a half centuries ago, and whose childhood, youth, manhood and age were compressed into the narrow span of three and thirty years. Most ordinary and even extraordinary historical characters become increasingly shadowy and unreal, as the gulf of time yawns more widely between them and the actual occupants of life's busy stage; but here is one of whom the reverse is true, and who is more conspicuously visible to the great eye of the world now than he has ever been at any given point of the more than eighteen centuries that have elapsed since his disappearance from among men. So manifestly is this the case, that if it were asked which of all the many questions in the catechism of the times really excites the deepest interest, the reply must be—it is that which eighteen hundred and forty years ago rang like a sharp-toned bell "throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria," but now reverberates with a thousand-fold greater loudness throughout all the world—from east to west and from pole to pole:—"What think ye of Christ?" As the dwellers in the Alpine districts of France and Switzerland have ever in view a multitude of peaks, domes and pinnacles, while there towers in majestic and solitary grandeur above them all one sublime and lofty summit, so amidst all the topics of human thought to-day, looming up like myriad mountain-ranges,—Christ is the Mont Blanc that rises in unspeakable majesty above the

* Part First of the Address at the opening of the Thirty-Fourth Session of the Congregational College of B. N. A., in Zion Church, Montreal, Sept. 16, 1872.